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11-3-31
Ribes
Substitutes

EDIBLE FRUITS BORNE ON MANY ORNAMENTAL SHRUBS.

Flowering Quince and Mulberry May Supplant Currant
and Gooseberry - Objectionable Blister Rust Hosts.

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Many people have been asking what they will do without currants and gooseberries and I hope I may reach a great many readers by the following which I quote from Dr. A. S. Colby's article in July 1924 issue of American Fruit Growers' Magazine entitled "Hardy Ornamental Shrubs With Edible Fruits."

"It is not generally recognized that an ornamental shrub, which fills a distinct place in the art of landscape gardening and the beautifying of homes and gardens, may in many cases also serve a utilitarian purpose. There are many shrubs grown primarily for their flowers which also bear fruit of good quality, fruit which may be used to advantage in the making of jellies, conserves and marmalades. It certainly is worth while to include some of these doubly useful plants in arranging the plantings about the home, since they may be used in foundation planting, in borders, as hedges and in helping to screen out undesirable views.

"Few nurserymen make any effort to acquaint the buyer with the fact that certain species and varieties of flowering quince, for example, bear fruit of good size, suitable for the making of quince honey; that the dwarf June-berry bears fruit of excellent quality; that some of the mulberries are too good for chicken feed only.

"The writer has been interested in the subject for several years and has made a beginning in the collection of plants primarily of ornamental value, which can also be of considerable use in furnishing new sources of food.

"Darrow has worked, among other things, with the American High Bush Cranberry, *Viburnum Americanum*, and in reporting the results of his work in the 'Transactions of the American Society for Horticultural Science,' for 1923, says that 'the hardiness of this fruit, its pectin content and the color of the jelly made from it combine to make selected strains of it of considerable promise as a jelly fruit in northern regions with severe winters.'

"Two years ago, the writer had the good fortune to study the Japanese quinces growing in the Arnold Arboretum near Boston. The various species and varieties of *Chaenomeles japonica* and *Ch. Maulei* were found to bear fruit of very different character as to size, shape and culinary quality. This study is being continued through the courtesy of the Arboretum. There are few more beautiful ornamental shrubs when in bloom than the Japanese quinces and the fact that some of them bear fruit of edible quality makes these shrubs doubly valuable.

"Most people, especially in the middle west, are familiar with the shed bush or Service berry, *Amelanchier alnifolia*. It is also known as the June-berry. The dwarf form, especially, forms symmetrical bushes which bear large crops of bluish black berries in June quite similar in taste to huckleberries and excellent either for eating out of hand or in pies. There are, of course, great differences in size and flavor of the berries from different bushes and by securing propagating wood from superior plants, it has been possible to produce a fruit of good size and excellent quality.

Mulberries have not been commonly regarded as promising material by the plant breeder or the housewife. Most of the varieties are grown either for ornament or planted in the chicken yard for the chickens and with the vain hope that the robins will leave the berries alone. There

are, however, varieties which bear fruit somewhat more tart than others and which can be used to advantage for pies and in conserves. Many of the red mulberry varieties if picked a shade underripe and canned like raspberries will taste very much like loganberries if served with meat at the winter dinner table. I have tried them and I know them to be excellent."

Many cases have come to the department where people throughout Plymouth county and specially in the town of Hanson have been setting out shrubs as mentioned in Dr. A. S. Colby's article and have had excellent success.

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